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COMMITTEE ON IRISH AFFAIRS.

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AN IRISH POLICY
FOR A
LIBERAL GOVERNMENT.

BY

THOMAS A. DICKSON, M.P.
CO. TYRONE.

PUBLISHED FOR
THE COMMITTEE ON IRISH AFFAIRS
BY
WYMAN & SONS, GREAT QUEEN STREET, LONDON, W.C.
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AN IRISH POLICY FOR A LIBERAL GOVERNMENT.

THE Political Committee on Irish Affairs having invited me to express my views, from the standpoint of an Irish Liberal, on some of the leading Irish questions which will soon engage the attention of the House of Commons and of the country, I enter upon the task, well aware of the difficulty, indeed, the impossibility, of indicating an Irish policy which could prove acceptable to the Nationalists on the one hand, and to the Irish Tories on the other. But this will not prevent the candid expression of my opinions, nor deter me from attempting, however feebly, to interest and, if possible, to influence English public opinion in dealing with Ireland.

It is no secret that upon the Liberal benches of the House of Commons the gravest anxiety, if not dissatisfaction, exists among English members in connexion with the administration of Irish affairs; and, if this discontent does not manifest itself in the division lobbies, it is simply owing to the repelling influence of violent speeches and bitter personal attacks which, during the course of Irish debates, alienate too often the votes which would otherwise be given to the Irish party.

The present year, it is needless to say, will be one of

immense political importance to the United Kingdom, but especially to Ireland; and its political issues, are awaited with deep anxiety. Those who have studied Irish questions, even from different standpoints, will admit that the future of Ireland—its peace and prosperity—depends upon how that country will enter upon 1886—a year in which for the first time the masses of the people will stand enfranchised; and how Ireland will face its responsibilities depends mainly upon the Irish policy of the Government during the remaining days of the present Parliament.

CONCILIATION OR ALIENATION.

The Cabinet must now decide between a policy of conciliation and a policy of alienation. If a policy of conciliation be not adopted, we shall have the renewal of the Coercion Act, expiring in September, with a repetition of the usual wearisome nights, painful debates, and disgraceful scenes, to say nothing of the loss of most valuable time. But, apart altogether from the feelings certain to be excited in the House of Commons, English members should consider the effect of an irritating policy on Ireland, and especially on those who have just been admitted within the pale of the Constitution. Would it be wise or politic to enter wantonly upon what must be a bitter struggle with the Irish people, and in the last days of an expiring Parliament to needlessly exasperate a newly-enfranchised nation? If Coercion Acts could have effected the amelioration of Ireland, Ireland long since would have been a happy country; but these disastrous measures have never produced any enduring beneficial results, and have invariably ended in disappointment and failure. "All legislation, all acts of this description were," said Roebuck, in 1846, "mischievous; first because they were inefficacious,

and next because, if efficacious in some measure, it was more for evil than for good." Coercion Acts may be powerful engines for summarily suppressing crime, or, in Lord Cowper's phrase, "driving it beneath the surface"; but, whilst they may temporarily suppress, they tend equally to create it, by developing a spirit of resistance and disaffection in the people. What other result can be expected from the use of means which admittedly are not the instruments of constitutional government, but desperate expedients which demonstrate the absence of legitimate rule? One of the most disastrous periods connected with Irish administration was introduced by the fatal policy of prefacing the Land Act of 1881 by a Coercion Act, which, instead of mitigating, intensified the dangers of the time. Under this Act some 900 men were locked up in Irish prisons upon suspicion, without any form of trial; and to all of them the temporary confinement, so far from being feared as a punishment, was coveted as an honour.

The political condition of Ireland to-day shows little alteration from that of 60 or 70 years ago. Taking up old volumes of "Hansard," one reads debates on the "State of Ireland," which, instead of being ancient history, read as if they were the history of our own times. An eminent writer recently said that "in Ireland history but repeats itself with the fidelity of a stock piece at a theatre where nothing is changed from generation to generation but the actors." In a debate on the "State of Ireland," 1816, Sir John Newport submitted the following motion:—"That the necessity of providing an army of 25,000 men to secure the tranquillity of Ireland obliges us to consider that portion of the United Kingdom as most distressing and afflicting to the legislature, and dangerous to the well-being of the Empire." In support of this motion

he said:—"It will be asked why Ireland has not made infinitely more progress during the last six centuries of its connexion with England. The answer is obvious, the inference irresistible. Ireland has been misgoverned, and no other cause can be assigned. I ask, Will you, can you, continue to rest for security upon an army of 25,000 men? What has been the history of the statute book since the Union but a catalogue of Habeas Corpus suspensions and Coercion Acts?" It is almost needless to say that the motion was rejected. From that date the "State of Ireland" continued to be annually a subject of discussion in the House of Commons up till 1846, when it was brought forward very prominently by Lord John Russell in an attack upon the Irish policy of Sir Robert Peel, who refused to be responsible for the Government of Ireland without coercion. Russell's speech, laid side by side with Sir John Newport's, is a curious confirmation of what is so often stated, and what every volume of "Hansard" confirms, that few new features turn up in Irish debates. "Ireland (he said) was filled with troops, the barracks fortified, preparations made as if an outbreak of civil war was hourly expected. Did not these facts justify him in believing that Ireland was occupied, but not governed, by those who held the reins of power? In England the government was a government of opinion, in Ireland it was notoriously a government of force. Was this the fulfilment of the promises made at the time of the Union? Was it wonderful that the poorer classes, instead of having recourse to public tribunals, should fly to violence?" The result of the debate was that the Coercion Act was thrown out and the Peel Ministry defeated. Having regard to the action of Lord John Russell, and the celebrated speech (so often quoted) of Mr. Disraeli, about the same time,

one would have thought that a few brighter pages in Irish history were about to be written; but, notwithstanding his emphatic language when in opposition, Lord John Russell, when retiring from office a few years afterwards, left Ireland just as he had found it. Mr. Disraeli's speech and sympathy likewise ended in nothing, for, in 1852, on the breakdown of Lord Derby's first administration, he was forced to make the touching but significant confession, "Our policy in Ireland is gone—my own loyal friends from Ulster embarrassed me."

But Englishmen may ask, Is it *possible* to govern Ireland without Coercion Acts? and would it be safe to rely solely upon an impartial and vigorous administration of the ordinary law? Let history answer again. In 1833 Lord Grey's celebrated Coercion Act, to put down the resistance to the payment of Tithe, was passed, and remained in operation until it expired in 1835. Up to this date force had been the only means of governing Ireland. Lord Morpeth occupied the position of Chief Secretary, but the administration of affairs was virtually in the hands of the Under-Secretary, Thomas Drummond. To the credit of Drummond be it said, he undertook to govern, and did govern, Ireland successfully by the ordinary law, until his death in 1840. Compare the state of Ireland under the Coercion Act of Lord Grey and under the constitutional government of Drummond. When Lord Grey's Act had been a year in force, a special Commissioner was directed to report upon its working, who stated: "It would be difficult to give an idea of the state of Ireland, in which country there is a total absence of anything like order or security." The judges of assize, in their charges to grand juries, gave equally painful accounts of the deplorable condition of the country. But, when constitutional government by Drummond came

into operation, a marked improvement set in, and a general decrease of crime, compared with former years. Judges were enabled to congratulate grand juries upon "the tranquillity which was becoming established over the country"; and Sir William Somerville, speaking of the results of Drummond's government, said: "What I remark in Ireland at present, with the greatest satisfaction, is the growing feeling of respect for the law." In the House of Lords an Irish peer said: "We have received sufficient evidence since 1835 that stringent enactments are of no use in governing the Irish people, for at no period of the history of the country have the people been so amenable to the laws." Finally, after four years' experience and an inquiry by a Select Committee, Lord John Russell stated, in 1839, that crime had diminished, and that the increased security and value of property was proved by the most reliable test—that five years' more purchase was paid for land than had been given during the seven previous years. This statement of Lord J. Russell's deserves special attention in the present depressed condition of the Irish land market, when property is almost unsaleable: and in the interests of the landlords themselves, apart altogether from the general welfare of the country, it might be prudent to risk again the experiment of constitutional government.

Past experience conclusively proves that the peace and tranquillity of Ireland must commence and proceed from within, and that no permanent improvement can ever be attained by severity and pressure from without. But it is said that, if there is any relaxation of the exceptional laws now in force and if the pressure of Coercion Acts be removed from Ireland, a fresh outbreak of crime is certain to follow, accompanied by a development of conspiracy. This, no doubt, may be the opinion of many Resident Magistrates and Inspectors of Police who find

the exceptional powers of the Crimes Act much more convenient and less troublesome than the ordinary law, and who, in trifling cases, make use of its provisions in a manner never contemplated or intended by Parliament. There is now a lull in Ireland, peace and order prevail in every county, the minds and attention of the Irish people will be engrossed during the coming autumn and winter with all the excitement attendant upon a General Election, when, for the first time, the masses of the people will exercise the franchise; and I have more respect for the intelligence of my countrymen and those who lead them, than to think that they would be so insane as to damage or prejudice Ireland in the estimation of a Reformed Parliament. Will the Government have the courage to trust Ireland from September to February, a brief space of five months, to the efficacy of the ordinary law, leaving the question of coercion to a reformed House of Commons? or will they continue to rely on the expedients of despotic power, so often employed in vain? Will the Prime Minister, in the closing days of his splendid career, trust the people he has enfranchised, and make an heroic effort to relieve Ireland from the stigma of perpetual coercion? These are the questions which are now uppermost in the thoughts of all who are concerned for the future of Ireland.

LAND PURCHASE BILL.

Turning, however, to more pleasant topics inseparably connected with conciliation, the first in importance and urgency is a LAND PURCHASE BILL. The whole tendency of land legislation in Europe for the past half century has been in the direction of ownership, as opposed to tenancy. England alone has been behindhand in recognising the importance of

this subject, though no country in Europe presented the same facilities as Ireland for giving effect to the principle of occupying ownership. In 1850 Germany brought to completion the great land reform commenced by Stein; but, in that very year, England allowed a splendid opportunity to pass when dealing with the Irish Encumbered Estates. Had our statesmen commenced when Germany completed her work, and had facilities been afforded to the Irish tenants to become the successors of their bankrupt landlords, there would have been no Irish land question to-day to embarrass England. But the remedy provided for the desperate state of affairs then existing, ultimately proved an utter failure. The occupiers met with no consideration from the Encumbered Estates Court, which simply handed over the tenants' interests and improvements to the mercy of the land speculator, and thereby laid the foundation for the thirty years of agrarian crime and agitation, that culminated at last in the Land Act of 1881.

The Land Purchase Bill, which was brought forward last year, is expected to appear again. The Government know its weak and defective points, and have had ample time to amend them; the measure is anxiously awaited by landlord and tenant alike; for until the Bill passes there can be no release from the deadlock existing in the Irish land market. If the coming measure again fails to grapple, in a broad, comprehensive, and generous spirit with the whole question, the disappointment will be intense. No niggardliness is ever manifested when millions are voted in a single night for India, for annexations in Africa, or for military expeditions up the Nile; but when money is wanted for Ireland—not to be wasted in war, but to be invested in the best interests of peace—a few Treasury rules and restrictions are so skillfully

introduced as to render inoperative the original intentions of the measure. The Chancellor of the Exchequer need not be apprehensive of a run upon the Treasury, for, even should the Purchase Bill offer the most liberal facilities, the tenant-farmers are at present so impoverished and disheartened, owing to the long-continued depression of agriculture, that they would not be induced to buy to any great extent for some time. But, meanwhile, the Government can do much to bring landlord and tenant to terms; and it is of vital importance that the settlement of judicial rents should be followed by some practical measure for converting tenants into owners, for by this means alone can the land war be ended. There are now in Ireland some 15,000 owners of land as against half a million of tenants; reverse these figures and England would create a native army of occupation far more powerful for peace and order than all the regiments which now hold the country.

LOCAL AND COUNTY GOVERNMENT.

Next, and claiming immediate attention, comes the question of LOCAL GOVERNMENT. Hitherto the Irish people have had little responsibility in the management of their own affairs. It is true that we have municipal government, but the population of Ireland is mainly rural, not urban—out of five millions, only one million residing in the towns—and, as a result, the great mass of the people are left in ignorance of the first principles of self-government, and are thus deprived of the best school for developing sound political opinions. Take the Grand Jury system, for instance, and what is it but a standing reproach to English legislation for Ireland? In every election address, at every political meeting it occupies a prominent place of condemnation; and, outside

county cliques who manipulate for themselves and their friends the patronage and the emoluments, it is regarded with detestation as the last stronghold of class-government; and taxation by a self-elected and irresponsible body. These Grand Juries levy annually, in the shape of county cess, a sum of nearly one million and a half, the tax-payers having neither voice nor vote in connexion with assessment or expenditure. It is not, therefore, a matter for surprise that the people are antagonistic to a system so unjust and humiliating, or that the country is troubled with domestic strife. "Question time" in the House shows to what extent petty squabbles, which might easily be settled at home, are obtruded on the time and attention of Parliament. Every domestic grievance, of merest local interest, now finds its way to the House of Commons, to the exclusion of great affairs of the Empire; and such will continue to be the case till the attention and energies of the people are directed to the control and management of their local affairs.

Forty years ago, when O'Connell carried Ireland for the Whigs against the Young Ireland party, security of tenure for the Irish farmer, and County Boards for the protection of the Irish tax-payer, were, with other reforms, definitely promised. But what a commentary upon English statesmanship in Ireland! With nothing to block the way, with no obstruction in Parliament, fixity of tenure was but the other day conceded in the Land Act of 1881, and Grand Jury Reform is still a question of the future.

One need not be a prophet to say that the present system is doomed, that the whole plan of Local and County Government must be reconstructed and brought into harmony with the wishes of the country. We have been told that the Bill conferring Local Government on England is already

drafted, and may be before the House and country this session. But, as with the Franchise Bill, so also with this; no measure excluding Ireland—or which fails to give equal rights to Ireland with England—will have any chance of passing the House of Commons. No doubt the class in Ireland which up to the present has had a monopoly of patronage and power will protest, and they will naturally urge that it would not be prudent or safe to hand over the management of all county business—taxation, asylums, poor-law, education, and many other interests—to such men as form the staple of our elected guardians. The difficulty is not by any means to be underrated. In the transition stage from one system to another, and perhaps for some time afterwards, there might be gross blundering, mismanagement, and not a little jobbery, just as there is under the present system. The art of managing one's own affairs is not learned in a day; it can only be acquired by experience and practice. Let it be remembered, however, that the men composing county boards and boards of local government would be elected by, and responsible to, the tax-payers; and that additional safeguards could be supplied to prevent injustice, catastrophe, or collapse.

The chief difficulty lies in the strained relationships existing between classes in Ireland. County government is in the hands of a class who, by the abuse of their position and by ignoring the people, have long since forfeited the confidence of the country. Every true friend of Ireland must disapprove of government by, or in the interests of, any class, and desire to see government by and for the whole people. It is needless to say the future of Ireland entirely depends upon the cordial working together of all classes—with mutual toleration and mutual concessions—Tory, Liberal, and Nationalist striving to realise that they are the people

of a common country. Where religious animosities are fostered and fanned it is hopeless to expect that peace or prosperity can find a resting-place. "Many things in Ireland," said Lord Beaconsfield, "need reconstruction—almost everything except religious hatred, which should be destroyed." As a Presbyterian, I am not prepared to relinquish any of my denominational rights, and am ready to resist every encroachment upon them; but I fully recognise that my lot is cast in a country where Roman Catholicism guiles and controls the lives of the vast majority of the people; and that much misgovernment in the past has arisen from ignoring or disregarding this important fact. In Ireland, as everywhere else, wealth, social position, commercial activity, thrift, and prudence have always asserted themselves, and will continue to do so. But what Englishmen have to realise is this—that, in the Ireland of to-day, government cannot be carried on by or for a minority.

THE BOARD OF WORKS.

Closely connected as it is with efficient local government, the BOARD OF WORKS—identified with so many Irish interests and bound up with the improvement and development of the country—also claims special attention. In its administration and operations it is supposed to arrange and control the arterial drainage and navigation of the country; to negotiate harbour and railway loans, as well as loans to counties and local boards, and to supervise a variety of improvement schemes under the various Land Acts. An Englishman or Scotchman would naturally conclude that this Board, above all others, would be an Irish department, and, like the Local Government Board, under the immediate direction of the Irish Executive. Strange as it may appear,

this is not the case. Neither the Lord Lieutenant nor the Chief Secretary has any control over the Board. Like many other institutions in Ireland, it is Irish only in name. In reality it is a Treasury department having, for appearance and convenience, an office in Dublin. Its chairman, and staff, and entire management are under the immediate control of a few Treasury officials in London who know nothing of Ireland, and whose mouthpiece in the House of Commons, in connexion with this Irish Board, is always a purely English official—the financial Secretary to the Treasury for the time being. In 1877 a Departmental Committee sat to inquire into the operations and administration of this Board, and made its report in 1878. That report was a mild condemnation of the system; but after a lapse of six years, notwithstanding numerous recommendations, the only change yet effected has been the retirement of Colonel M'Kerlie and his replacement by General Sankey.

The Board of Works coming into immediate contact with so many Irish interests, all closely connected with the material progress and development of the country, could, if transformed, render great service; but, whatever scheme of Local and County Government may be settled, it is essential that this Board should be brought into direct relationship with the local authorities in Ireland, and be, what it is not, an Irish Board of Works.

"THE CASTLE."

The bureaucratic mischief, of which Grand Juries and the Board of Works are specimens, pervades all the Government of Ireland, and it is summed up in that institution, unique in the political world, and never understood by English politicians, which is known in Ireland under the name of "The Castle."

However great may be the evils everywhere arising from centralisation, they are intensified in Ireland. In three provinces out of four, Government, from the Lord Lieutenant down, is hopelessly out of sympathy with the bulk of the people to whom "Dublin Castle," from the associations and traditions of centuries, is the embodiment of all that is hateful. I do not say this is just. For, whatever may be said in reference to "The Castle" of bygone times, no men have ever been more anxious to do full and impartial justice than Earl Spencer and the late Lord Frederick Cavendish. They entered on their office to reverse the policy of their predecessors, and to inaugurate an era of conciliation; but the very day upon which they assumed office proved to be a crisis, rare even in the history of Ireland; when the Phoenix Park atrocities convulsed the country and almost paralysed the arm of justice. Crime stalked abroad red-handed, and a reign of terror seemed to have set in. At such a time, Lord Spencer and Mr. Trevelyan, who courageously took the vacant post, carrying their lives in their hands, as veritably as though on a field of battle, grappled with anarchists till they brought order out of confusion and re-established the supremacy of the law. Perhaps, when the days of leisure come, Mr. Trevelyan's facile pen may give to the world "The Experiences of an Irish Chief Secretary": if such a work should ever see the light, we may hope that, as it will assuredly illustrate the difficulties of the path so heroically trodden by himself and Earl Spencer, it will also be frank enough to disclose the history of many of the serious errors of the time.

But however able the administration, the system itself has outlived its day; it is out of touch with a sensitive people, and keeps alive the traditions of past misrule. When the

institutions of a country are held in detestation by the mass of the people, there is not much hope that the laws will be respected, or that life and property will be secure. The first step, therefore, towards cure should be the removal of the cause, by making the institutions of Ireland such as will command the confidence of the people.

How does the Government of Ireland stand? The Lord Lieutenant is an Englishman, the Chief Secretary and Under Secretary are Scotchmen; one and all exceptionally able men, and animated by the highest motives. But they are not Irishmen, and the country is not their country. The policy of England, especially, strange to say, of Whig and Liberal Governments, toward Ireland has ever been to ignore Irishmen in connexion with the administration of the affairs of their own country. From 1700 to 1800 we find that but one Irishman filled the office of Lord Lieutenant. Since the Union, from 1800 to 1885, only two Tory Irish noblemen have occupied the position of Viceroy. Could such a policy prove otherwise than a source of irritation,—that Irishmen, who can govern in Canada, India, and Australia, are ignored in their own country? With regard to the Chief Secretaries,—for whose office one would naturally think an Irishman indispensable to an English Lord Lieutenant,—for almost two centuries, from 1700 to 1885, only eight were Irishmen. Just one hundred years have elapsed since Lord Northington, writing from Dublin Castle to Fox, said,—“I must confess it is a very wrong measure of English government to make this country the first step in politics, as it has usually been. I am sure men of ability, knowledge of business, and experience, ought to be employed, and not gentlemen taken wild from Brooks's to make their *début* in public life.”

The average sojourn of a Chief Secretary in Ireland is

about 18 months. Since 1880 we have had four. They flit across the stage of Irish affairs, leaving behind no enduring monument of their administration to keep their memory alive in the hearts of the people. Lord Lieutenants and Chief Secretaries may come and go, but the old stereotyped officialism goes on for ever. When a change of Government takes place in England, the English people know it, and the effects felt, and influences the general administration; but not so in Ireland. In the words of an Ulster farmer, "The Liberals are often in office, but the Tories are always in power." The Duke of Marlborough leaves Dublin Castle, and Earl Cowper arrives and enters upon the duties of his high office, simply commencing where his predecessor left off; so that a change of Government from Conservative to Liberal, as far as "The Castle" is concerned, never strikes the imagination of the Irish people.

ABOLITION OF THE LORD LIEUTENANCY.

But when considering what can be done by way of remedy, one is confronted with the fact, that there is absolutely nothing new to suggest. I would advocate the abolition of the Lord Lieutenancy; but this is no new feature in the Irish programme. The pages of "Hansard" are full of similar proposals. This office, which has existed for over 700 years, may have been necessary when communication with Ireland was not only slow and irregular, but difficult and dangerous. But, whatever reasons there were in the past for a Viceroy, there is none in these days of mail steamers and electric telegraphs. In an Appendix will be found extracts from Parliamentary debates, commencing in 1824, which tell their own story and will repay perusal. They show the uniformity in public opinion on this subject

for more than sixty years, and that the Nemesis of delayed reforms is always pursuing us. Speeches of leading politicians condemn in the most forcible language not only the office of Lord Lieutenant, but the whole system of Irish Government. Conservatives like Whiteside; Whigs like Bernal Osborne, Bellew, and Brownlow; Radicals like Hume and Roebuck; Nationalists like Maguire and Sheil; and statesmen such as Lord John Russell and Lord Althorp; with ex-Chief Secretaries like the late Sir Robert Peel, Sir William Somerville, Lord Naas, and Mr. Chichester Fortescue, were all equally emphatic in their condemnation. Archbishop Whately, more than thirty years since, said,—“No friend of the Union—no friend of good government, can wish to retain that office. Disaffection to our Lord Lieutenant is cheaply shown, and it paves the way towards disaffection to the English Crown.” The forcible language employed by the late Chief Justice Whiteside, in the debate of 1857 (see Appendix), represents what every Protestant Liberal in Ulster feels to-day. We are loyal to the Throne and opposed to Separation, but it is a mistake for Englishmen to suppose that Irish Protestants are devoid of national sentiment and feeling.

Lord John Russell, in 1850, brought in a Bill to abolish the office of Viceroy,* and said that the Government had had such a measure long in contemplation. The speech he made when introducing the Bill, occupies many pages of "Hansard," and there is not an argument he employed then that is not equally applicable and cogent to-day. The proposals of the Government were supported not only by Mr. Gladstone, but by the leading Conservatives from Ireland; and Nationalists of to-day could not use much stronger language

* See Appendix, p. 27.

than that employed by Lord Naas (afterwards Irish Secretary and Viceroy of India). The Bill was carried by the immense majority of 225—only 70 voting against it; but its history closed upon the day it passed the second reading. For thirty-four years it has remained buried in the pigeon-hole of some Government office. Meanwhile the cause of its abrupt extinction remains a mystery which the "Life and Letters" of some statesman may yet unravel.

Had the proposals of the Government of Lord John Russell in 1850 been carried out and a Royal residence established in Ireland, and had Ireland during the past thirty years received even a tithe of the attention and consideration lavished upon Scotland, much of the asperity and bitterness of Irish political life might have been toned down and a healthier state of Irish society developed. The recent visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales shows that even yet it may not be too late, if that beginning be followed up by prompt action.

The Irish people may and do quarrel with Governments, but they have no quarrel with the Royal family, who have always been popular in Ireland. There could be no stronger proof of this than the enthusiastic reception accorded to their Royal Highnesses by all classes in Dublin, and there are the strongest reasons for believing that they would have been as cordially received in the South of Ireland had it not been for the indiscreet writing of a portion of the London press, who, immediately after the magnificent reception in Dublin, were unwise enough to embarrass the Royal party by taunting and challenging the Nationalists, and in consequence, it is believed, elicited the hostile demonstrations at Malloy and Cork.

For the office of Viceroy should be substituted an Irish Secretary of State, with a seat in the Cabinet, and responsible

solely to Parliament for Irish business; and this official and his staff should, as a rule, be Irishmen. If the absence of the Viceregal Court would be considered a loss to the capital, it would be more than compensated for by a Royal residence in Ireland. It is impossible to deny that the sentiment of loyalty to the Throne has been greatly weakened in Ireland by the systematic absenteeism of the Royal Family.

"The Castle" should be replaced by an Irish Home Office in Dublin, on a business-like basis, and easy of access to every one having suggestions to make as to the affairs of the country; and the unpopular title of "The Castle" should disappear from every official document in connexion with the administration of Irish affairs.

To sum up.—The Irish policy of a Liberal Government for Ireland should be:—

- 1st. The total abandonment of Coercion Acts.
- 2nd. The passing of a Land Purchase Bill, in such a form as to be easily worked and to benefit equally landlord and tenant.
- 3rd. The announcement of a Scheme of Local and County Government on the widest and most comprehensive basis.
- 4th. The abolition of the Lord Lieutenantcy, and the establishment of a Royal Residence, accompanied by an entirely new departure in the administration of Irish affairs.

This programme may be considered by some rather sweeping and radical; but, whether a Liberal or a Conservative Government succeed to power after the next general election, a revolution in the Irish administration must and will inevitably follow.

Our present Chief Secretary, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman,

addressing his constituents, since he entered on office, said that "the Irish people should have their affairs managed as much as possible in their own way, and that Irish administration should be adapted to their ideas, and not as has too often been the case, to ours. What we have to do is to assist and enable our fellow-subjects in Ireland to enjoy laws and institutions which are adapted to and which fully recognise the peculiar circumstances of race, creed, and social and civil history." The policy I advocate does not go one step in advance of the Chief Secretary, but what steps will he take or advise for giving effect to his principles, and for the realisation of the expectations created by his official utterances?

Mr. Gladstone, no doubt, has already done much to redeem English statesmanship in Ireland from the reproach of centuries. By the Church Act he has given Irishmen religious equality; by the Ballot Act a free vote; by the Land Act he has gone far to securing them their just rights in the soil; and now, by the Franchise Act, he has brought within the pale of the Constitution the masses of the people. When time has cooled down the fierce passions of to-day, Irishmen may be relied upon to do him full justice. What Ireland is to-day, England has made her. The ignorant and the thoughtless may regard her as wayward and ungrateful, but Englishmen must always remember that seven centuries of conflict and misgovernment have left deep wounds which cannot be healed by the remedial legislation of fifteen years.

To give that remedial legislation a fair chance it must be continued and completed. At present it is but half-done work, from which no full results can be expected, and the value of what has been accomplished will certainly be lost if not followed up, and followed up with the boldness and faith in the power of sound principles which the gravity of the Irish problem demands, and by which alone it can be solved.

APPENDIX.

EXTRACTS FROM "*HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES*" ON THE ABOLITION OF THE LORD LIEUTENANCY OF IRELAND.

1823.

Mr. HUME on June 25th, 1823, moved the following resolution for the Abolition of the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland:—

"That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, praying that a Commission be appointed to inquire whether the government of Ireland under the present form ought to be continued, or whether the Lord Lieutenant and other officers may not with advantage be dispensed with."

In course of his speech he said:

"One great evil of the present system arose from the Viceroy's Court being the focus of faction and intrigue, thus producing virulent party spirit, from which emanated many of the evils which long distracted Ireland. Ireland with seven millions of a population never could be valuable to Great Britain whilst governed as a Colony, and by Coercion."

Sir H. PARNELL:—

"He had recommended to the House some Sessions ago to adopt the plan now proposed by the member for Aberdeen (Mr. Hume). He considered it to be utterly impossible to administer the English Constitution by a Deputy Executive Government. It was a great mistake to say the Viceroy gave weight to the Royal Authority—the people had suffered so much injustice from the Irish Government, that they never would have confidence in it."

Mr. HUTCHINSON:—

"When the enormous expense incurred by a military force in Ireland was talked about, what answer did he give as an Irishman? by retorting on the British nation that abominable system of misgovernment which had been pursued for centuries by this country towards Ireland—a system which had converted Ireland into one great barrack."

Motion withdrawn.

1830.

Mr. HUME, on May 11th, 1830, again brought forward his motion, and in the course of his remarks said :—

"The office of Lord Lieutenant had cost the country many millions of money—it tended to keep up party spirit—it tended to excite and maintain those feelings of rancour and hostility which it should be the object of all the friends of that country to see at an end. In the act of Union, he found no reference to the keeping up of the Lord Lieutenant, and he would now try by his motion to remove the present degrading stigma from the Irish people, and to give them the reality of the promise held out at the time of the Union.

"The strength of England depended on the union of Ireland, and Ireland could not be cordially united with England unless she were trusted as an integral part of the dominions. The Government of that country was in a continual state of vacillation. No Viceroy ever followed the policy of his predecessor in Ireland in such a manner as to give confidence to the people that anything was fixed or could be depended upon."

Mr. SPRING RICE :—

"Nothing could be more injurious to Ireland than the system of constantly shifting and changing in the Government. Chief Secretary had followed Chief Secretary, and every one seemed to have been selected with the view of contrasting him with his predecessor. Let the House look at the long list of Chief Secretaries since the Union, and ask themselves how it was possible that a permanent system of government could be carried on in Ireland. On the average, every Chief Secretary remained in office about eighteen months, and just when a Lord Lieutenant had earned a character in Ireland and could be of service to it, he was recalled and another appointed who had all the labour to go through. These circumstances naturally led to misgovernment, and the fact was that a small body of gentlemen, known in Dublin as 'The Castle,' but not known in the country, assumed all authority, and in consequence of their knowledge of parties in Ireland they had it in their power to create or continue the distractions of the country. He was not one of those who wished to divest monarchical rank of its dignity, but he was averse to the mimic splendour of the viceregal throne. He was sure that society in Ireland derived no advantage from the existence of a Court in Dublin."

Lord ALTHORP :—

"He had nearly made up his mind that the office of Lord Lieutenant ought to be abolished. In Ireland they had only the trappings of Royalty, and not a single advantage of a monarchical form of government, since they had perpetual change.

Mr. BROWNLOW :—

"No substantial or satisfactory arguments had been used to show why the office of Viceroy should not be abolished. The Irish people under it had suffered too much oppression, and witnessed too much corruption, and the people never would believe that they were well governed or justice conceded until this form of Government was abolished."

House divided. For the motion, 115; against, 229.

1844.

Mr. HUME on May 9th, 1844, again brought forward his motion, and said :—

"The office of Lord Lieutenant was beneficial neither to England nor Ireland—it had even been prejudicial; it was still prejudicial, and it would continue to be prejudicial. Forty years had passed since the Union, and at this moment discontent and distraction spread from one end of Ireland to the other. He called upon the House, after a trial of forty-four years, to abolish a system of Government which had rendered Ireland little better than a colony. In the thirty years preceding the Union there had been fourteen Secretaries for Ireland. In the thirty years following the Union there had been sixteen Irish Secretaries, and he doubted if any of them had time to make themselves acquainted with the real condition and interests of Ireland. He might quote the opinion of nearly every Irishman against the present system of Government in his country. The Right Honourable Baronet (Sir R. Peel) had stated that Ireland was his great annoyance, and he feared she would be until a new mode of governing her was adopted, and he called upon the House to let Ireland have that good government, to which she was entitled."

Captain BERNAL OSBORNE :—

"In the course of last session and during the debate on the state of Ireland, the House could not fail to have been struck with the observations of the Hon. Member for Shrewsbury (Disraeli), who defined Ireland to be 'a country afflicted with a starving population, an absentee aristocracy, an alien church, and the weakest executive in the known world,' and he hoped before he sat down that the House would be convinced, not only that it was the weakest, but the most mischievous executive in the world. The office of Lord Lieutenant was always given to a political partisan. If a Whig Lord Lieutenant was appointed, on his very first appearance the Tory nobility and gentry treated him with contempt. If he chanced to appoint a Roman Catholic, a relative of the great demagogue (O'Connell), nay, if he went a little further and

asked that hon. gentleman to dinner, all the Orange dowagers of both sexes declared that the Constitution was destroyed. What happened if there was a Conservative Lord Lieutenant? The Dublin coteries were in ecstasies, the Tory lords and gentlemen exulted, the people were disheartened. The Orange Association, a class whom Burke described as 'never showing any wonderful zeal for religion except when it was employed to mortify their neighbours,' addressed the new Lord Lieutenant as the man described by Scripture to burn the Temple and overthrow the altars of their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects. If the Right Hon. gentleman opposite would concede that Government in Ireland, as elsewhere, was an experimental, and therefore a progressive science, it was remarkable that for six hundred and seventy-two years government had made no progress in Ireland. In 1172 an English Lord Lieutenant was appointed, and now in 1844 an English Lord Lieutenant still presided over the destinies of Ireland. From 1711 to 1800 but one Irishman filled the position of Lord Lieutenant, and from 1800 to present day there had been only one, the Marquis Wellesley. From 1711 to 1844 there had been forty-four Chief Secretaries, of whom seven only were Irishmen or connected with Ireland. He had the honour for seven years of being on the staff of the Lord Lieutenant under Lord Normanby and Lord Fortescue, and so far from the Lord Lieutenant producing habits of union it had proved a fertile source of jealousy. Grattan had defined the true genius of the Irish nation to be 'affectionate.' He need not recall to the House their desperate fidelity to a fallen race of monarchs, but till the Hanoverian succession they had never seen a monarch except under arms against them."

Lord JOHN RUSSELL :—

"He had occasion in former years to consider whether it were advisable to abolish the office of Lord Lieutenant, and he thought there were reasons of great force in favour of such a step—yet he came to the conclusion that it was not expedient at that time to make such change. As to the best mode of governing Ireland, he had no hesitation in saying that government by a Lord Lieutenant was not the best."

THE TIMES, May 10th, 1844, in its leading article upon this debate, said :—

"It is not often we subscribe to the opinions of the member for Montrose (Hume) on any question of general politics, but we are not indisposed to declare our belief that his motion deserved a better fate. We believe no motion had ever less claims to originality ; it is the fruit of a growing conviction and general feeling in this country. By the residence of a Viceroy in Dublin, we think that many of the symptoms which mark the social and political maladies of Ireland may fairly be attributed to it."

1850.

Lord JOHN RUSSELL, May 17th, 1850, moved for leave to bring in a "Bill for the abolition of the office of Lord Lieutenant in Ireland, and for the appointment of a fourth Secretary of State." In the course of his remarks in support of this motion, he said :—

"The members of the Government have for a very long time had in contemplation the measure I now have to propose. When Lord Clarendon went to Ireland, he went there on the distinct understanding with me that the office of Lord Lieutenant would, if Parliament should concur with us, be totally abolished. The Lord Lieutenant is placed in an anomalous position—asked for everything, appealed to for everything, blamed for everything, and yet not having the power which should belong to his situation. He has the semblance, but not the immunity, of royal dignity ; he has the responsibility, but not the freedom, of a Minister of the Crown. He is therefore obliged to bear much without answering, to defend himself with great reserve, and unable to take that free line which a Minister of the Crown can take in defending his own acts. The "divinity which hedges a king" gives but small protection to a viceroy. He has seemed rather a tempting object for attack. We have seen that no character, no kind of politics, no former services have saved Lord Lieutenants from such attacks. When the Marquis of Normanby was in Ireland, the great majority of the Roman Catholics were disposed to favour his Viceroyalty, and then we had a great number of persons of high rank refusing to attend the Levees and Drawing-rooms at the Castle—refusing to pay that respect to the representative of the Sovereign because they disapproved of the line of policy which he pursued. It seems to be a very great thing, a sort of show of patriotism to be able to brave and to beard a Viceroy in the Castle of Dublin. A Secretary of State may be attacked—may be violently assailed—may be blamed, but he has freedom of action, and takes his part in the debates which take place in regard to his acts, and for which he is responsible. I have stated that the presence of the Viceroy in Ireland, however able that Viceroy may be, however disposed to act impartially, it is impossible for him often to take such a line that he would not incur the resentment and obloquy of men of one extreme party or another, and that his presence there tends to keep alive and embitter party feeling. I will state finally that I think whether persons are favourable to the Parliamentary Union of the two countries or unfavourable, they must all agree that this institution ought not to be kept up, and I think the time has arrived when we may safely provide for the abolition of the Viceroyalty."

Mr. FAGAN :—

"The Proconsular Government must be got rid of, and Ireland must be governed by Her Majesty, directly through a Secretary of State,

having a seat in the Cabinet, and responsible for his acts. He supported the abolition principally, and above all, because of the union amongst Irishmen and for the nation's good which would unavoidably follow."

Mr. BERNAL OSBORNE:—

"He did not give his support to the Bill from any abstract love of political uniformity, for he believed that the greatest mischief had arisen from attempts to engraft English institutions on Irish habits. He regarded the existence of the office of Lord Lieutenant as a proof of national serfdom, and knew of no office which tended so much to demoralise Ireland and to weaken England. The office of Lord Lieutenant was originated at a time when the difficulties of going to Ireland were greater than a voyage to Nova Scotia. When Lord Stafford was about to proceed to Ireland as Lord Lieutenant in 1633, he was delayed three weeks by contrary winds, and having started, was unable to proceed because the Irish Channel was infested with pirates, and a ship of war had to be sent round from the Thames. The House was asked if it could abolish a national institution which was dear to the hearts of the Irish people. A National Institution!! Why if ever there was an institution which was anti-Irish in its tendency, and anti-national in its design, it was that of Lord Lieutenant. What were the histories of the Lord Lieutenancies? Could any Irishman look back upon them with pride? He found that whenever the Lord Lieutenant had been disposed to treat with consideration the native Irish, he was sure to become unpopular in England. It was for this cause that Sir John Perrott was denounced and impeached in 1588, and Lord Fitzwilliam recalled in 1795 because he did not choose to become the tool of English ministers. But to come to our own day, why was the Marquis of Normandy ostracised by the Protestant nobility? For this single reason, because he presumed to recognise the existence of Roman Catholics. He had himself heard the Marquis of Normandy likened, by a popular preacher, to Nebuchadnezzar because he had asked O'Connell to dinner. The inmate of Dublin Castle was the tenant of a gilded pillory, to be pelted by every scurrilous vituperator, and the Chief Secretaryship was merely a preparatory school for English statesmen. The Government of Ireland was a perfect anomaly. Sometimes the Lord Lieutenant controlled the Chief Secretary, occasionally the Chief Secretary controlled the Lord Lieutenant, and sometimes the Under Secretary controlled both, and he could not conceive a greater evil than a divided executive."

Division—Ayes, 170; Noes, 17. Majority for leave to bring in a Bill, 143.

THE TIMES, May 18th, 1850, in a leading article on the above debate, said:—

"The extinction of the Irish Viceroyalty has long been only a question of time. It is so in more senses than one. Delegations of this pleasing kind are only tolerated as necessary evils under extraordinary circumstances. But when the use of a political institution has ceased, the institution should cease also, for if it be useless it is sure to be injurious. The Viceroyalty is associated with more than the usual quantity of political disagreeables and inconveniences. Lord John Russell briefly enumerated last night some of these scandals which the Viceroyalty has occasioned, and some of the contumelies it had to endure. We could easily add to the list, for every Lord Lieutenant in his time has had appropriate persecution and obloquy. He has been the target for the shafts of all parties, and if the Repeal faction has shown its temper with somewhat more outrage and indecency, the Orange party has been equally, though more silently and grimly disloyal. Now, apart from the fact that every party in Ireland has over and over again called the Viceroyalty a "pageant," the Castle "a den of corruption," the Viceroy "a king in buckram," all parties have expressed their opinion of the office in a more substantial and emphatic manner by recognising the Viceroy or cutting him, as they pleased; and it is thought no impeachment of any man's loyalty if he slighted or actually insulted him. In point of fact, the Lord Lieutenancy has already received a virtual abrogation from public opinion and political usage. The opposition to the Bill consisted more in speeches than in votes; it only mustered 17, against exactly ten times that number. We shall probably hear less in the future of partisan Haddington, Algerine Anglesea, or gaol-deliverer Normandy."

The second reading of Lord John Russell's Bill was moved on June 10th, 1850.

Mr. GRATTAN, in opposing the provision of the Bill transferring to Her Majesty the power possessed by the Lord Lieutenant of issuing proclamations, said:—

"The Irish people were born under proclamations, they lived under proclamations, and under proclamations they died and were buried. No set of ministers ever had the courage to act boldly towards that country. In all their measures they halted half way. The present system of government in Ireland was demoralising the people—a general apathy was coming over them. But bad government was not only demoralising them, but sending them by thousands and tens of thousands away from the country altogether. The truth was, the hard work of legislating for Ireland had killed Ministers of State as well as Members of Parliament."

Lord JOHN RUSSELL:—

"He did not see any reason, as the two countries were so close, for

the necessity of having more than one court held by the Sovereign of the United Kingdom, nor did he perceive the necessity for there being a reflection and imitation of Royalty in Dublin. The Chief Secretary was only Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, but, if sitting in the Cabinet, he was giving orders to the Lord Lieutenant, but immediately on his arrival in Ireland, the Lord Lieutenant was his master; this was an anomaly which could never be got over, and great inconvenience arose in the administration of Irish affairs. This measure had been under consideration ever since the Earl of Clarendon had been sent to Ireland, and Lord Clarendon, after having given the matter his most mature consideration, assented to the proposal, and it was in consequence, and with his advice and counsel, that the measure was now brought forward."

Sir F. ROBERT PEEL :—

"I speak from experience as to the difficulties that have resulted from the position in which the Chief Secretary stands with regard to the Lord Lieutenant. You put the office of the Secretary aside from that of the Lord Lieutenant, you make him a minister for the administration of justice in Ireland—a minister possessing great power and exercising that power sometimes without communication with his chief—you thus place him in a position very difficult for any man with the best intentions to carry on the public business without the risk of occasional embarrassment."

Lord NAAS :—

"Looking back upon the history of Ireland, he believed that that history was but one continued scene of misgovernment. He looked upon the office of Lord Lieutenant as the chief feature of that system, and now that it was proposed to abolish it, he could but rejoice at the change, and should vote for its abolition."

Mr. S. HEIL :—

"I have risen with a view to prove two things—first, that the Lord Lieutenantcy is worse than useless; and, secondly, that the government of Ireland ought not to be absorbed in the Home Office. There was a time when the Lord Lieutenantcy was subservient to the policy upon which the government of Ireland was carried on—when Ireland was governed through the chief proprietors of that country—when the Irish gentry were the sole depositories of political power, and the entire patronage of the Crown circulated in a lucrative monopoly through that contracted channel. The Lord Lieutenant was now denuded of all influence and unable to effect the return of a single Member of Parliament, and what had been an engine of state was converted into a mere scenic machine for the very imperfect representation of Royalty on a very provincial stage. The spectators are weary of the exhibition, and it is

time that the theatre should be closed; let us get rid of this Irish Court, let this glittering superfluity be put aside, and let us give an opportunity to the Irish people to give the Sovereign of that great empire, of which Ireland constitutes a part so important, that frequent welcome which will never fail to come in fervour from the nation's heart."

Division on Second Reading :—

Ayes, 295; Noes, 70; Majority, 225. Amongst those who voted for the Second Reading were :—Lord John Russell, W. E. Gladstone, Marquis of Kildare, Sir Robt. Peel, Chichester Fortescue, Viscount Jocelyn, Sir William Somerville, Lord Seymour, Lord Newry, Lord Naas, J. M. Caulfield, Right Hon. H. L. Corry, Sir E. M'Naghten, W. Monsell, Bernal Osborne, Capt. Archdall, Hon. R. P. Dawson, T. Connolly.

Lord John Russell's Bill, carried as a Government measure by an overwhelming majority, was suddenly withdrawn, for reasons never yet explained, and the question remained in abeyance till 1857.

1857.

Mr. ROEBUCK, on July 7th, 1857, brought the subject before the further attention of Parliament, and moved :—

"That in the opinion of this House, the office of Lord Lieutenant ought to be abolished"; and said,—"My late lamented friend, Mr. Hume, very often pressed this proposition upon the House under difficult circumstances. I ask what benefit Ireland derives from the present anomalous condition. She has a Viceroy—a *papier-mâché* sort of Royalty—and I believe the existence in Dublin of that functionary keeps apart all the elements of society in Ireland. I would ask, How is Ireland governed? There is a divided responsibility: First, there is the Home Secretary; next, there is the Lord Lieutenant; and then the Chief Secretary. All these three are really the governors of Ireland. The history of this country, so far as Ireland is concerned up to within a few years, I am willing to admit has been a disgrace to England. In bringing forward this motion, I am threatened with opposition by the Member for the University (Mr. Grogan). He represents Dublin. He represents the milliners of Dublin. I am told that I bring my motion at an "unpropitious period." "Unpropitious"! Is the present time more unpropitious than 1850? I hold in my hand the proposals of the Prime Minister (Lord John Russell) for then abolishing the office of Lord Lieutenant. My motion is a plain and simple proposition—it is to do away with the Lord Lieutenantcy of Ireland—it is an appeal to the House to make Ireland really a part of the great kingdom to which she belongs, and to abolish the last badge of conquest."

Mr. WHITESIDE :—

"He was compelled by a respect for the truth to admit that the government of Ireland was very inefficiently conducted. He could not conscientiously say that he was as great an enthusiast as in his younger days for the maintenance of the office of Lord Lieutenant, and if he heard any intelligible plan proposed for the abolition of the office—a plan which would not, like many other measures of Irish legislation, make matters ten times worse,—he would be prepared to give it his careful consideration. He was a Protestant and a Conservative, but he must say that were Ireland as far removed from England as Canada is, the system of government that was now adopted would be blown to pieces as easily as a house of cards. This country had to govern six millions of people. He had seen Ireland governed by three estimable persons, no doubt—Lord Carlisle, Mr. Horsman, and a Colonel of Engineers. Did honourable members suppose that if Irishmen had the power to resist, they would endure a system of government under which three gentlemen were appointed to administer the affairs of the country—with which no one of the three persons named were connected by property, birth, or education? In his part of Ireland the people hardly knew by whom the office of Chief Secretary was filled. He would say that the government of Ireland was opposed to nine-tenths of the industry, the intelligence, and the intellect of the people. When Mr. Buchanan, the President of the United States, was in this country, he had the pleasure of meeting him, and found that he was from the same part of Ireland as himself. Now those whose interests he was upholding could turn out fifty as good men as Mr. Buchanan, and yet that gentleman was considered to have capacity enough to govern a great republic, whilst his countrymen were scarcely deemed competent to furnish an Under-Secretary. Such was the system by which Ireland was ruled. He had no desire to raise the question of nationality, because his own attachments, political and religious, and those whom he represented, were with England; but while he and they entertained those sentiments, let no man suppose that the Irish had not strong feelings of nationality, and were not fully alive to the viciousness of that principle in accordance with which Ireland was governed."

Sir WILLIAM SOMERVILLE :—

It was his intention to vote for the motion, having been for a considerable period connected with the government in Ireland, at a period when he had the honour of holding the position of Chief Secretary. The Prime Minister (Lord John Russell) introduced a Bill to effect this object, and he had seen nothing and heard nothing since which in any degree altered the opinions he then expressed. The present system of government in Ireland was roundabout and unsatisfactory. In his opinion, Irish as well as Imperial interests would gain by the abolition of the Lord Lieutenantcy. There was not in the whole world an office

so anomalous in its nature as that of Lord Lieutenant, and that was the opinion of several Chief Secretaries who had given their attention to the subject."

For the motion, 115; against, 266; majority, 151.

THE TIMES, of July 8th, 1857, referred to the above debate as follows :—

"There was a time when an Irish Viceroy was a political necessity. A second court implies not only distance and disunion, but inferiority extends to the whole system. Where there are two courts, one lower than the other, it is quite certain that in the lower men will rise, and deeds will be done, and practices will obtain, that never would in the higher court. Such a court is not only a second court, a deputy court,—but a spurious thing, a bad imitation, a downright imposture. Everybody feels it so. The Viceroy himself knows that he is a monarch in buckram—that he is a thing of the hour—made yesterday, and going to-morrow. The second personage in the farce, the Chief Secretary, would be only too glad to find that he was equivalent to an English secretary. Does the Viceroyalty promote residence? What is the fact? During the several hundreds of years that Ireland has had a separate court it has suffered more from absenteeism than any other part of the empire."

1858.

Mr. ROEBUCK, on March 25th, 1858, again moved :—

"That in the opinion of this House the office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland ought to be abolished, and the office of Secretary of State for Ireland at once created." In his remarks he said :—"I believe the abolition of the office of Lord Lieutenant will elevate Ireland from the state of a province to the position she ought to hold as an integral part of the Imperial Government of this country. I want Irishmen to have the same confidence in Ireland that I have, for I believe she is able to take her position as a great independent portion of the Empire of Great Britain and Ireland. No one more fully admits than I do that for centuries Ireland has been the subject of misgovernment. She has suffered more from England than almost any country has suffered from another country. I appeal to every gentleman at all acquainted with society in Dublin, and I ask whether he does not believe in his heart that society is really injured by the existing institution of a Lord Lieutenantcy of Ireland? If society in Dublin was like society in the great cities, such as Leeds, Liverpool, Glasgow, and Manchester, it must be dependent upon itself. The going to the Castle does not depend on worth or wealth, but on the intrigue and mere *ipse dixit* of a

certain underling. The Lord Lieutenant is not responsible to Parliament. The Chief Secretary is responsible to Parliament; and if he were the real governor of Ireland, I should say it was a very good institution."

Colonel FFRENCH :—

"With the exception of the office of Lord Chancellor, every post of any importance connected with the Irish Government was occupied by either Englishmen or Scotchmen, notwithstanding the fact that Irishmen were quite as well qualified for positions of public responsibility. It was customary to talk of the misgovernment of Ireland—but if Ireland was or had been misgoverned, to whom was the blame attributable but to the Government of England, and to their alien nominees in Ireland?"

Mr. DODSON :—

"It appeared to him that the present time was eminently suited for legislation. He was opposed to the maintenance of the Viceroyalty. There was nothing at the present time to prevent Her Majesty from frequently visiting Ireland, and he would put it to Irish gentlemen whether they would not prefer one week of the sunshine of true sovereignty in Dublin to twelve months of the moonlight of the fictitious sovereignty of the Lord Lieutenant."

Mr. BAXTER :—

"On three different occasions his predecessor in the representation of Montrose (Mr. Huine) proposed a similar motion. It was received with approbation by the Liberal party, and the noble lord (Russell) took it under the wing of his Government in 1850 and carried it in the House of Commons. From all he had heard and read, he concluded that no man was prepared to stand up for this office, for when any motion upon the subject had been introduced, it was always met by the previous question. It would appear strange if the House, having decided by a large majority against a system of double government in India, should refuse to abolish a similar system with respect to Ireland."

Mr. DOBBS :—

"As an Irish Member, he thought this office ought to be abolished. The North of Ireland was in favour of the change, and he believed that even in Dublin the feeling for the abolition of the Viceroyalty was gaining ground."

Mr. CHICHESTER FORTESCUE :—

"He was not anxious for the perpetual maintenance of the Lord Lieutenant. For his own part, if they were to abolish the Viceroyalty,

he believed that the proposition before the House was the only safe one to adopt. He believed the time would come for such a change. As an Irishman he never thought of that office without some feelings of shame and inferiority. The fact was, that, however estimable, however high-minded and good-intentioned the Lord Lieutenant might be, it was impossible for him to be anything but a party man, and he hoped some Government would bring in a measure, not only to destroy this ancient and effete institution, but to establish in its room fresh machinery of administration which would confer far greater benefits on Ireland both as to local legislation and legislation in the House."

For the motion, 116; against, 243; majority, 127.

THE TIMES of March 26th, 1858, in reference to this debate, said :—

"No Englishman who merely considers his own instincts would think of voting for a continuance of the Viceroyalty. In conceding a mock court to Ireland, Englishmen only do so as they would give glass beads to savages, or be the spectators of some ridiculous ceremony. Nothing could induce a large company of sober English country gentlemen, bankers, lawyers, or merchants, to leave their houses or business to go and pay their respects to a man acting in mid-day the part of a sovereign. It is so much better done on the stage. Even these pageants sicken—thrones, processions, crowns and sceptres, heralds, banners and trumpets, and all the rest of it, must be charily introduced and eked out with a good deal of meretricious decoration for the vulgar taste. At Dublin it is neither one thing nor the other. It is not business; it is not good theatricals. The Viceroy is a bad actor; he would never draw in England—not even in the provinces. He would be hissed down the first night and never heard of again. It is not so in Ireland—such is the difference between the two countries."

COMMITTEE ON IRISH AFFAIRS.

At a series of Meetings held in the Conference Room of the House of Commons in the course of the Session of 1883, it was decided that a Committee should be formed during the Recess under the above name, for the purpose of assisting to create a well-informed public opinion in England in all that relates to Irish Reforms.

The following are the material parts of the Programme which was finally adopted. The Committee expressed their conviction that there was still much to be done before the Legislation necessary for the proper government of Ireland and the development of its resources could be considered complete. At the same time they felt that the consideration of Irish affairs was beset with many difficulties, one of the most serious being the difficulty at all times of obtaining unbiassed and accurate information, whether in matters of fact or opinion. In this view they resolved that the work of the Committee should be to circulate necessary information, to promote discussion on practical lines, and to create a means by which the public might be furnished with independent reports and correspondence from competent observers on the spot as to the facts of contemporary Irish history, the state and needs of the country, and the opinions of the people.

Among the subjects on which it is intended to publish papers are:—

The Irish Franchise, the Creation of Local and County Government, the Reform of the Centralised System of Administration in Dublin, the Working and Results of the Land Acts, the Extension of the Purchase Clauses and the Promotion of Occupying or Peasant Proprietary, the Condition of the Congested Districts and the Labourers' Question, the Industrial Development of Ireland and the Results of the Tramways and Harbours Acts of last Session, the Improvement of Irish Education and of the Status of the National School Teachers, Facilities for Irish Private Bill Legislation, &c.

The assistance of Liberal organisations throughout the country is solicited for the distribution and discussion of these publications, which will be supplied to them at a reduced price.

Among the Members of Parliament who have already signified their adhesion to the Committee's programme are:—

B. Armitage, Esq. M.P.; Wm. Agnew, Esq., M.P.; James W. Barclay, Esq., M.P.; John Barran, Esq., M.P.; R. P. Blennerhassett,

Esq., M.P.; J. C. Bolton, Esq., M.P.; W. E. Briggs, Esq., M.P.; Jacob Bright, Esq., M.P.; John Brinton, Esq., M.P.; H. Broadhurst, Esq., M.P.; James Bryce, Esq., M.P.; Thos. Burt, Esq., M.P.; W. S. Caine, Esq., M.P.; Arthur Cohen, Esq., M.P.; J. Dickson, Esq., M.P.; Thomas A. Dickson, Esq., M.P.; Joseph Dodds, Esq., M.P.; J. F. B. Firth, Esq., M.P.; Wm. Findlater, Esq., M.P.; Fr. Henderson, Esq., M.P.; Isaac Holden, Esq., M.P.; C. H. Hopwood, Esq., Q.C., M.P.; Alfred Illingworth, Esq., M.P.; S. Laing, Esq., M.P.; Thos. Lea, Esq., M.P.; R. Leake, Esq., M.P.; Henry Lee, Esq., M.P.; C. B. B. McLaren, Esq., M.P.; Hugh Mason, Esq., M.P.; J. G. McMinnies, Esq., M.P.; J. Dick Peddie, Esq., M.P.; Sir E. J. Reed, M.P.; J. N. Richardson, Esq., M.P.; Charles Russell, Esq., Q.C., M.P.; P. Rylands, Esq., M.P.; John Slagg, Esq., M.P.; Wm. Summers, Esq., M.P.; J. P. Thomasson, Esq., M.P.; S. C. Evans Williams, Esq., M.P.; W. Woodall, Esq., M.P., &c. A large number of others have also given their adhesion.

Since the opening of the present Session further meetings have been held, and an Executive Committee, with power to publish, has been appointed, consisting of Mr. James Bryce, Mr. R. P. Blennerhassett, Mr. Thomas A. Dickson, Mr. Alfred Illingworth, and Mr. Charles Russell, with Mr. W. Summers as treasurer, and Mr. B. F. C. Costelloe (33, Chancery Lane, W.C.) as secretary. It has been resolved to issue a series of papers as occasion requires, on the understanding that the Committee does not in any case make itself responsible for the political opinions of the writers, who will sign their names.

Offers of help in any form will be gladly received by the Secretary, and subscriptions towards the work of publication may be forwarded to the Treasurer, or to the account of the Committee, at the Union Bank of London, Chancery Lane Branch.

Papers already published (to be obtained from Wyman & Sons, Great Queen-street, W.C.):—

No. I. ENGLAND AND IRELAND. By James Bryce, M.P.

No. II. NOTES AND STATISTICS CONCERNING THE IRISH FRANCHISE. By B. F. C. Costelloe.

No. III. OBSERVATIONS AND STATISTICS CONCERNING THE QUESTION OF IRISH AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS. By H. Villiers Stuart, M.P.

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